A PREFACE TO THE Christian Readers.

PRayer is the most comprehensive Instance of Religious Worship, which we all ought to give unto God from our Youth up, and (to say nothing of its other Benefits,) of greatest influence into a good and vertuous life. It is great pity therefore that any should neglect thus to Honour God and profit themselves for want of some plain and useful help for the due performance of it.

Those that stand most in need of Assistance this way, are the younger and more ignorant sort of People, Children and Servants: whose Capacities are well to be considered of: That neither their understandings be confounded with things above their reach, nor their memories over-burthened with too great a length or variety.

And, for such as these, methinks nothing can be more apposite than the pious and wholesome Direction of a Reverend Divine in his late Treatise of Prayer, That they would learn the Lords Prayer, with the Explication of it, and the sum of the Ten Commandments in the Church Catechism turned into Prayer, and other short comprehensive Forms: and that Parents would be careful to teach their Children such, and see they say them.

Dr. Bright *Treat. of Prayer*, Cap 5. Sect. 19. p. 387.

In pursuance of which Excellent Advice, I do heartily recommend the ensuing Platform to all whose hearts God shall incline to make use of it: where I have prefixed the open and personal Profession of Christianity it self, according to our Baptismal Vow; a Point which I conceive of great usefulness in it self, and the greater still, because Confirmation is so much neglected.

This Religious course will make the Plain and Godly Principles of the Church

Catechism

Catechism (which is too commonly despised) to take the deeper Root, and stick the faster in the minds and affections of those that have learnt it, and help exceedingly to reduce those fruitful Principles into practice: being a continual Monitor both of the threefold Engagement we are under as Christians, and the chief Rules we are taught to observe in Order to our discharge thereof.

I will say no more of it farther, but this: that it seems to me a good expedient against many extravagancies, which attend Arbitrary and Extempore Devotions: and may possibly train up a Generation of Honest and Orderly Christians to succeed us.

Only I must admonish those who make use of this Plat-form, these two things in the General.

I. *That they bethink themselves what they are going about; namely to Address unto, and Worship the Great God of Heaven and Earth, who is present with them, though they see him not, to behold and observe all their carriage: And,*

II. *That they say and repeat every clause Leisurely, Gravely, Distinctly; and labour to keep their Eyes from wandring, and their Thoughts as intent as may be, to the words they utter; and, as they grow in years, improve in the considering more deliberately of them, and being affected with them.*

And so I leave this Charitable Help, intended for Beginners, to their kind acceptance, and God Almighty's Blessing upon the conscionable use of it.

AN

Help to Prayer.

Fall down upon thy Knees with Reverence, and say;

GOD be merciful to me a Sinner!
Enter not into judgment with thy Servant, O Lord: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

A Form of daily acknowledging and confirming our Baptismal Vow.

I Do, before God and his Holy Angels, Acknowledg and Renew the Solemn Promise and Vow, made in my name at Baptism; and do verily think, that I am bound in Conscience,

I. To renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh:

II. Heartily to Believe, and openly to profess, All the Articles of the Christian Faith: and

III. To keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my Life.

And Thus, by God's help, I will do.
And I heartily thank our Heavenly Father, that

he hath called me to this ſtate of Salvation through Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour; That is, That he hath made me a Member of Chriſt, a Child of God; and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven; upon theſe Gracious Terms and Conditions which are all for my greateſt Good.

But, knowing that I am not able to do theſe things of my ſelf, I pray unto God for his Grace, which he hath promiſed unto them that aſk it, that I may both perform and continue in the ſame unto my lives end. *Amen.*

Then ſay the Lords Prayer.

OUr Father which art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name;
Thy Kingdom come;
Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven;
Give us this day our daily Bread;
And Forgive us our Treſpaſſes, as we Forgive them, that treſpaſs againſt us;
And lead us not into Temptation,
But Deliver us from Evil;
For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory; for ever and ever. Amen.

And add this Paraphraſe upon it.

O Lord God, our Heavenly Father, the giver of All Goodneſs!

Send thy Grace, I beſeech thee, unto me and All people, That we may Worſhip Thee, Serve Thee, and Obey Thee, as we ought to do: even as Saints and Angels do in Heaven.

And I pray unto Thee, O God, That Thou wouldſt

ſend

send us All things, that be needful, both for our Soul and Bodies; for this Life and a better.

And that Thou wouldeſt be Merciful unto us, and forgive us our Sins upon our True Repentance; As thou haſt commanded us, and by Thy Grace we are diſpoſed to forgive thoſe that Treaſpaſs against us.

And that it will pleaſe Thee to ſave and defend us in all dangers, Ghoſtly and Bodily, That we be not hurt by the Aſſaults of the one or other.

And that Thou wouldeſt keep us from all Sin and Wickedneſs, [which is the greateſt evil] and from that evil one, our Ghoſtly Enemy, [the Devil] and from Everlaſting Death; the moſt dreadful of penal evils, which is the due wages of Sin.

And all this, O Heavenly King and Father, as Thou art able to do by thy Power, ſo, I truſt, Thou wilt do for us of Thy Mercy and Goodneſs, which is Thy chiefeſt Glory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: and therefore, to teſtifie both my earneſt Deſire and Hope, I ſay, *Amen.* So be it. So by the Grace of God it ſhall be.

Inſtead of the Creed this Doxology.

Then riſe up, and inſtead of the Creed, which thou mayſt ſometimes alſo Rehearſe, ſay this Doxology *devoutly, which takes in the* Three things *that we* chiefly *learn from thence.*

Glory be to God, the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Creator, Preſerver and Governour of all things, viſible and inviſible, who hath made, doth Preſerve and Govern me, and all the World!

And

And to the Only Begotten Son of that Eternal Father, who in the fulness of Time was made Man, and hath Redeemed me, and all Mankind, with his most precious Blood!

And to the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, the Sacred Spirit of Light, and Grace, and Comfort, who sanctifieth me, and all the Elect people of God, that is, All true Christians!

As it was in the Beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without End. *Amen.* Lord I Believe, help thou my Unbelief.

Then fall again on thy Knees, as before, and say

The X. Commandments turned into Prayer.

Have Mercy upon me, O Lord, have Mercy upon me, a miserable Offender; for ever miserable without Thy Mercy; and incline my heart to keep all thy Commandments, I beseech Thee:

That I may both knew and practise my bounden Duty.

The sum of the first Table.

That I may Believe whatsoever Thou sayest, who art Truth it self; and fear to Offend thy Majesty; and love thee above all, with all my Heart and Mind, and Soul, and Strength; That I may Worship Thee as Thou requirest, in SPIRIT and TRUTH: That I may in every thing give Thanks unto Thee for thy Benefits, and at all times, put my whole Trust and Confidence in Thee;

in all my wants call upon Thee by Prayer and Supplication: That I may Honour Thy Holy Name, and Thy Word; and ſerve Thee truly, all the Days ſet apart for thy Worſhip, ſo all the Days of my Life.

The Sum of the ſecond Table.

And that, for thy ſake I may love my Neighbours as my ſelf; and to do unto all and every Man as I would they ſhould do unto me, in the like Relation and Condition of Life:

More particularly,

That as a dutiful Child, I may Love, Honour, and Succour upon occaſion, as I am able, my Natural Parents, Father and Mother:

That, as a Good and Loyal Subject, I may Honour and Obey the King, [the Father of my Country] and all that are put in Authority under him:

That I may Submit my ſelf to all my Governours, Teachers, Spiritual Paſtors, and Maſters:

That I may order my ſelf lowly and reverently to all my betters:

That I may hurt no body by Word or Deed; but be true and juſt in all my dealings:

That I may bear no malice, nor Hatred or Revenge in my Heart: [which is Spiritual Murther.]

That I may keep my hands from Picking and Stealing; which is often a ſtep to greater wickedneſs.

That I may keep my Tongue [that unruly Member] from evil Speaking, Lying, and Slandering; [ſo common in the World.]

That

That I may keep my Body in Temperance, Sobrieneſs and Chaſtity, undefiled with Fleſhly luſts, ſuch as the Sins of Gluttony, and Drunkenneſs, Fornication and Adultery.

That I may not ſo much as Covet or deſire Other men's Goods; but learn and labour truly, [with Contentment and Diligence] to get my own living, and do my duty in that ſtate of Life, whatſoever it be, unto which it ſhall pleaſe Thee to call me. *Amen.*

Concluding with this Collect.

The Collect to be added hereto. O Almighty Lord, and Everlaſting God; Vouchſafe, I beſeech Thee, to Direct, Sanctifie, and Govern both my Heart and Body, in the ways of theſe thy Holy Laws, and the Works of Thy Commandments; that through thy moſt Mighty Protection, both here and ever, I may be preſerved in Body and Soul, through our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*

Then ſay the Collect for Morning, *or* Evening.

For the Morning.

O Lord, and Heavenly Father, Almighty and Everlaſting God, who haſt ſafely brought me to the beginning of this Day; [for which I bleſs thee] defend me in the ſame with thy mighty power; and grant, that this Day I fall into no Sin, nor return into any kind of danger; but that all my doings being ordered by Thy Governance, I may do always that which is righteous in Thy ſight, Through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

For the Evening.

Lighten my Darkneſs, I beſeech Thee, O Lord [and

Father of Lights] and by thy great Mercy defend from all Perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son, *my Saviour*, *Jesus Christ*. Amen.

Then Recomend thy self, Relations and Friends to God's Blessing, Thus,

The concluding Petitions.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, whose I am and whom I serve; in whose Name I was Baptized, and to whose Faith and Fear I am devoted, Bless me both in Soul and Body, Prosper the work of my hands, and the way of my goings; and together with me, Bless my Soveraign Lord the King, with all the Royal Family, and all that Minister under him, both in Church and State; my Honoured Parents, and those in their place and stead; my Father and Mother, Grand-Father and Grand-Mother, God-Fathers and God-Mothers, Uncles and Aunts, my Brothers and Sisters, with the rest of my natural Kindred and Relations, my Master and Mistress, all my Benefactors and good Friends; the Family wherein I am and all the Neighbourhood about me; with all Blessings Temporal and Spiritual, Now and Ever. *Amen.*

Thy Grace, O Lord Jesus Christ; Thy Love O Heavenly Father; Thy in-lightning, Sanctifying and Comforting Fellowship, O Sacred Spirit, be with me, and all I should pray for, This day [or this night] and Evermore. *Amen, Amen.*

THE END.

Post

Postscript.

IF this course of Prayer seem too *long* for any
may sometimes omit one part, and sometimes
ther; but so, as to reassume them at times of g
vacancy and leisure, such as Sundays and Holy-d
wherein I advise to use them all.

And if any, on the other side, think them too *sh*
They have a farther supply at hand in the Publick
turgie; out of which I recommend to them these pa
cular Prayers and Collects to be gotten without Book

The Prayer for all Conditions of men,
and
The General Thanksgiving.

Then before they read in their Bibles, or g
Church to Hear, This Collect.

BLessed Lord, who hath caused all Holy Scriptures t
be written for our Learning: Grant that we may in su
wise Hear them, Read, Mark, Learn, and inwardly Dig
them, that by Patience and Comfort of Thy Holy wo
we may embrace, and ever hold fast the Blessed Hop
of Everlasting Life, which thou hast given us in ou
Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

After Reading or Hearing, This.

Grant, we beseech Thee Almighty God, that th
Words which we have this day Read [or Heard with
our outward ears] may through thy Grace be so graft
ed inwardly in our Hearts, that they may bring forth
in us the Fruit of good living, to the Honour and Prais
of thy name, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

Grace

Postscript.

Grace *before Meals.*

O God, in whom I live, and Move, and have my Being, bless thy good Creatures, I beseech Thee, to my Use, and me to thy Service, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

After Meals.

The God of all Power and Glory, who hath Created, Redeemed, and at this time plentifully fed me, His Holy Name be blessed and praised for ever. *Amen.*

Upon all occasions, These Pious Collects.

Lord of all Power and Might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things, graft in our Hearts the Love of thy name; increase in us true Religion; nourish us with all Goodness, and of thy great Mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty and Everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are Penitent; Create and make in us New and Contrite Hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our Sins, and acknowledging our Wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all Mercy, perfect Remission and Forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a Sacrifice for Sin, and also an Example of Godly Life; give us Grace, that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit; and also daily endeavour our selves to follow the blessed steps of his most Holy Life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* [*With many others.*]

FINIS.